

SHAVUOS 2026

A rulebook for a **stronger** Yom Tov.

We were given the Torah on Har Sinai along with the responsibility to uphold the rules given to us by Hashem. These rules, while they may seem restrictive, actually give us the freedom to live a better life. So too does a healthy, nutritional program. While we celebrate receiving this rulebook for life, let's not forget the rulebook for health.

We've compiled some guidelines to guide you through this holiday. Happy Shavuot!

— EMPOWER

EMPOWER.

Eight rules for the table.

The goal over Yom Tov is just to stay the same. We don't expect you to lose — just try not to gain.

01

PLAN YOUR MEALS AHEAD

If you're eating at home this is easy. If eating out, find out what's on the menu and make your choices AHEAD of time. General rule: ONE plate with ONE serving of protein (or a combo of 2), ONE small serving of starch (unless you're having challah), and lots of vegetables. Dessert can be fruit, sugar-free compote, or low-calorie ices.

02

EAT BREAKFAST EVERY MORNING

Many people skip breakfast to 'save up' calories for the meals — this backfires. A good breakfast stabilizes blood sugar and makes you less likely to overeat later.

03

BE A BUSY GUEST (OR HOSTESS)

Keep yourself moving — serve, chat, help clear the table. Anything that keeps you from sitting at the table for long stretches.

04

STOCK UP ON EMPOWER CHEESECAKES

Delicious, low-calorie, and perfect for when everyone else is having 'the real thing.'

05

CHEAT — IN MODERATION

Make sure it's worth it (a real piece of cheesecake, not the leftover noodles). Plan for it so YOU control it. And no regrets — have it, forget it, don't let it spiral.

06

MAKE UP FOR IT

Treat it like a bank account. Cheesecake on day one? Take a brisk walk after, or skip dessert that night. When you withdraw, you deposit.

07

WRITE IT ALL DOWN

As soon as Yom Tov is over, write down everything you ate. Accountability — and it may make you think twice next time.

08

WALK IT OFF

A brisk walk burns calories AND puts you in the right mindset, away from the table, pantry, and kitchen.

A SAMPLE DAY

Breakfast: Regular choice or Empower item

Lunch/Dinner: 1 slice of challah OR a starch, plus one protein (or a combo of two) and vegetables.

Daily budget (use in any order):

- Your fruits
- 2 snacks
- 1 treat

SHAVUOS NIGHT LEARNING

- ◆ Make an iced green tea or have a Vitamin Water Zero, and sip it throughout the night.
- ◆ Cut up veggies and leave them close by so you can pick at them when hungry.
- ◆ Stay far from the junk food being handed out — keep cut fruits and vegetables near you.
- ◆ If you feel like candy, have a Fruit-A-Peel pack.
- ◆ Coffee!
- ◆ Sugar-free candy or mints in moderation.

Know your cheese, know your milk.

Cheese in moderation is calcium, protein, vitamins A and B-12 — even linked to better bone health and lower stroke risk. Choose low-fat, low-sodium, all-natural varieties.

MYTH OR FACT

Too much dairy is bad for you.

This is a **FACT**.

Dairy protein is concentrated; too much over time can contribute to chronic inflammation (calcium deposits, potential arthritis), faster aging (hard to digest), poor skin (overworked liver and digestion), and increased cancer risk (prostate, breast, testicular, colon). As always — everything in moderation.

MYTH OR FACT

Lots of milk = stronger bones.

Not quite.

It depends on age, gender, and amount. Plant foods often do the job better — kale and almonds for calcium, spinach and beans and soy milk too. Potassium in tomatoes, sweet potatoes, bananas, oranges. Vitamin D from tuna and salmon.

HOW MUCH DAIRY?

2–3 low-fat servings per day.

Milk & alternatives, per 1 cup

TYPE	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FAT
Whole	150	8g	8g
Low Fat	110	8g	2.5g
Fat Free	90	8g	0g
Soy	131	8g	4.3g
Oat	120	3g	5g
Hemp	83	4.7g	7.3g
Almond	39	1g	3g

Cashew	25	<1g	2g
Rice	120	1g	2.5g
Coconut (not canned)	45	0g	4g

Popular cheeses, decoded

Feta

Brine-cured, usually from sheep's milk. Crumbly and popular in salads, omelets, and as a garnish.

BENEFITS

- Easier to digest, less inflammatory than most cheeses
- Lower in fat than cheddar or Parmesan
- Good source of protein
- Rich in B6, vitamin A, calcium, phosphorus, potassium
- Contains probiotics good for gut health

High in sodium — not ideal close to a weigh-in due to water retention. Stay under 2,300 mg sodium daily.

CAL	FAT	SAT	CHOL	SOD	PROT
75	6g	4.2g	25mg	31mg	4g

Serving: 1 oz / 28g

Mozzarella

The melting cheese everyone loves — sought after for taste and texture.

BENEFITS

- Source of biotin (B7) — supports nails and may help blood glucose
- Source of riboflavin (B2) with antioxidant properties
- 183 mg calcium per ounce — bone and teeth health
- High in protein for energy and muscle strength
- Source of potassium — helps offset sodium's effects

High in saturated fat — opt for low-fat varieties and use in moderation.

CAL	FAT	SAT	CHOL	SOD	PROT
78	4.8g	3g	15mg	4mg	8g

Serving: 1 oz / 28g

Cottage

A long-time favorite among athletes and anyone watching their weight. Mild, fresh, made from curdled milk.

BENEFITS

- Good source of magnesium — supports muscle, nerve, immune function
- Rich in protein — great quick option, no cooking required
- Can aid weight loss — keeps you full, low calorie

CAL	FAT	SAT	CHOL	SOD	PROT
111	4.9g	1.9g	19mg	411mg	13g

Serving: 4 oz / 110g

Goat

Made from goat milk, available in soft and hard forms. Generally healthier than cow-milk cheese.

BENEFITS

- Lower in fat than regular cheese — less saturated fat and cholesterol
- Fewer calories — swap cheddar for goat and save 200–300 cal
- Lower in lactose — friendlier for the lactose-intolerant
- Less than half the sodium of regular cheese
- Especially calcium-rich

CAL	FAT	SAT	CHOL	SOD	PROT
103	8g	6g	22mg	146mg	6g

Serving: 1 oz / 28g

Twenty-two ways to enjoy the dairy.

From breakfast pancakes to grilled tuna — every recipe is plan-friendly with portion counts so you know exactly what it counts as.

BREAKFAST PANCAKES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (6 oz) container Greek yogurt, any flavor
- 2 egg whites
- ½ cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 tsp baking soda

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine Greek yogurt and egg whites until creamy. In a separate bowl, combine flour and baking soda. Mix wet with dry and stir until just combined. Let rest 10 minutes. Cook the pancakes using spray instead of oil.

Makes 2 servings. Count each as a complete breakfast.

OATMEAL RAISIN COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- ■ cup applesauce
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 2 egg whites
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- Pinch of salt
- 1½ cups oats
- ¼ cup raisins
- ¾ cup brown sugar Splenda
- 4 tbsp Splenda
- 2 tbsp oil

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 375°F. Mix Splenda, brown sugar, oil, and applesauce. Add vanilla and egg whites. Separately combine baking soda, cinnamon, salt. Combine wet and dry until blended. Stir in oats and raisins. Drop by tablespoon on a greased cookie sheet 2 inches apart. Bake 7–10 minutes until golden brown.

Makes 16 cookies. Count 2 cookies as a snack.

CHEESE LATKES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup low-fat ricotta or cottage cheese
- ¾ cup whole wheat flour
- 1 egg + 2 egg whites
- 2 tbsp zero-calorie sugar
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- ½ tsp baking powder
- Non-stick cooking spray

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all ingredients except spray in a food processor. Process ~45 seconds, scraping sides, until a thick batter forms. Spray a pan and heat over medium. Scoop batter onto pan in silver-dollar size (1–2 tbsp each), spread thin, cook 2–3 minutes per side until golden.

Makes 8 latkes. Count 2 as a breakfast or lunch — add fruit or veg.

CHOCOLATE CHIP MINI MUFFINS

INGREDIENTS

- 1½ cups whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 3 bananas
- 2 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 1 tbsp olive or coconut oil
- 1 egg
- ½ cup nonfat Greek yogurt or applesauce
- 1 tbsp unsweetened almond milk
- ¼ cup chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven 350°F. Whisk flour, baking soda, salt. Blend bananas, honey, vanilla, oil, egg, almond milk, yogurt until smooth. Combine wet and dry, fold in chips. Divide into a 12-cup muffin tin, bake 20–25 minutes.

Makes 12 muffins. Count each as a snack.

HEALTHY CHEESE BLINTZES

INGREDIENTS

- Wrappers: 1 cup low-fat skim milk, 4 eggs, 1 cup whole wheat flour, pinches of salt, cooking spray
- Filling: 2 cups low-fat cottage cheese, 6 tbsp Greek yogurt, 2 tbsp zero-cal sweetener, ¼ tsp vanilla (optional), lemon zest (optional), 1 large egg

INSTRUCTIONS

Blend wrapper ingredients and make blintz wrappers as usual. Mix filling until smooth. Place 3 tbsp filling across the center of each wrapper and fold. When ready to serve, fry in a pan with cooking spray until browned on both sides.

Count 2 blintzes as a full lunch — just add a salad.

MINI CHERRY CHEESECAKES

INGREDIENTS

- 2 eggs, beaten
- 8 oz reduced-fat cream cheese
- 1 cup fat-free cottage cheese
- ¼ cup sugar-free vanilla pudding
- ¼ cup sugar substitute
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 (10 oz) can no-sugar-added cherry pie filling

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven 350°F. Blend first 7 ingredients. Pour into muffin tins, bake 30 minutes until set. Refrigerate overnight (≥4 hrs). Spread cherry pie filling on top before serving.

Makes 12 mini cheesecakes. Count each as a snack.

FLAVORED DIET CHEESECAKE

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb farmer's cheese
- 1 slim flavored yogurt of choice
- 2 eggs
- 15 Splenda packets

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven 350°F. Blend everything well. Pour into a smaller round pan placed inside a larger pan with water (water bath). Bake 50–60 minutes. Cool, refrigerate, divide into 6 portions.

Makes 6 servings. Count one slice as breakfast — add a fruit or snack.

COTTAGE CHEESECAKE

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb low-fat cottage cheese
- 1 lb farmer's cheese
- 18 oz fat-free or low-fat cream cheese
- 4 eggs
- ½ cup xylitol
- 1 capful vanilla extract

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven 350°F. Mix all ingredients until smooth, pour into muffin tins. Bake 45 minutes uncovered. Cool before refrigerating.

Makes 12 servings. Count as: breakfast or snack.

HEALTHY CHEESECAKE ICE CREAM

INGREDIENTS

- 32 oz plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 16 oz low-fat cream cheese
- 1½ cups unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- 1 tbsp liquid Stevia (or more to taste)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp lemon flavor or ½ tsp lemon zest

INSTRUCTIONS

Freeze your ice-cream maker bowl 24+ hours. Blend all ingredients until smooth. Pour into the frozen bowl and churn on 'stir' to soft-serve consistency. Transfer to a freezer-safe dish, cover, freeze 3–5 hours before serving.

Makes 12 servings. Count each as a snack.

TNUVA CHEESECAKE

INGREDIENTS

- 3 Tnuva cheeses
- 2 tbsp light sour cream
- 5 egg whites
- 4 tbsp xylitol
- ½ pack sugar-free pudding
- 3 tbsp flour

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven 350°F. Whip egg whites with a hand mixer. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix smooth. Pour into a 9x13 pan. Bake 1 hour uncovered, cool before refrigerating.

Divide into 24 servings. Count as: treat.

MEDITERRANEAN ZUCCHINI NOODLE PASTA

INGREDIENTS

- 4 medium zucchini, spiralized
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ■ cup artichoke hearts, halved
- ¼ cup pitted olives, halved
- 2 tbsp grapeseed oil
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 3 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp white vinegar
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- ½ tsp kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

Rinse and dry zucchini, trim ends, spiralize. Add to a large bowl with tomatoes, artichokes, and olives. Whisk the remaining 7 ingredients into a dressing, pour over and toss. Serve cold with crumbled feta. For hot: heat oil, lemon zest, juice, vinegar, garlic in a skillet, add zoodles and cook until softened, then add remaining ingredients and warm through.

Makes 4 servings — count each as a fat and a vegetable.

DAIRY BAKED TILAPIA WITH DILL SAUCE

INGREDIENTS

- 4 (4 oz) tilapia fillets
- Salt and pepper
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup light mayonnaise
- ½ cup low-fat sour cream
- ■ tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh dill
- 1 tbsp Cajun seasoning

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven 350°F, grease a 9×13 dish. Season tilapia with salt, pepper, Cajun seasoning. Arrange in dish, top each with ~2 lemon slices. Bake uncovered 15–20 minutes until fish flakes. Mix mayo, sour cream, garlic powder, lemon juice, and dill; serve with the fish.

Makes 4 servings — count each as a complete protein, no added fat.

BAKED ZOODLES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 can tomato sauce (with spices)
- 3–4 oz reduced-fat mozzarella
- 3 zucchinis, shredded/spiralized
- ■ cup broccoli

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven 350°F. Spray pan and add zucchini. Mix in sauce, top with broccoli, sprinkle cheese. Cover and cook 30 minutes; uncover and bake 15–20 more until cheese is bubbling.

Count half the recipe as a protein.

CHEESY PORTOBELLO MUSHROOMS

INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz portobello or Baby Bella mushrooms
- Tomato sauce
- 1.5 oz reduced-fat mozzarella

INSTRUCTIONS

Roast mushrooms at 400°F for 20–30 minutes. Top with sauce and cheese, bake 10 more minutes.

Makes 1 serving. Counts as a full protein.

DAIRY CHEESECAKE MOUSSE PARFAIT

INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz reduced-fat or Greek cream cheese, softened
- ■ cup xylitol (or to taste)
- 1½ tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp lemon extract
- 2 Empower cookies, crumbled
- 1 cup whipped cream
- 1 cup frozen berries, thawed

INSTRUCTIONS

Beat cream cheese smooth. Mix in xylitol and extracts. Fold in half the whipped cream until combined, then fold in the rest. Beat on high until light and fluffy. Refrigerate ≥2 hours. To assemble each cup: ¼ cup berries, 2 tbsp mousse, ¼ of the crumbled cookie, 2 tbsp mousse.

Makes 6 servings. Count each as a special Shavuos snack.

COOKIE DOUGH PARFAIT

INGREDIENTS

- 2 containers Empower Cookie Dough — any flavor
- 3 (6 oz) containers Greek yogurt (or any yogurt up to 120 cal / 12g sugar)
- 1.5–2 cups blueberries or sliced strawberries
- 3 medium parfait cups

INSTRUCTIONS

Crumble all cookie dough to a granola texture. Layer evenly: yogurt → ■ cookie crumble → berries. Repeat until cups are full.

Makes 3 servings. Count each as a breakfast.

EASY CHEESY VEGETABLE QUICHE

INGREDIENTS

- 1½ cups sliced yellow squash
- 1½ cups sliced zucchini
- 1 large orange bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves roasted garlic, chopped
- 1 tbsp ground or fresh thyme
- 3 large eggs + 3 large egg whites
- ¾ cup skim milk
- ¾ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ■ cup reduced-fat shredded cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat a skillet over medium-high with non-stick spray. Cook squash, zucchini, pepper, garlic, thyme with a pinch of salt and pepper, stirring, 6–7 minutes until tender. Cool. Preheat oven 350°F. Whisk eggs, whites, milk, salt, pepper. Arrange veggies in a sprayed 9" pan, top with cheese, pour egg mixture over. Bake 45 minutes until set. Rest 10 minutes before slicing.

Makes 6 servings. Count each as a protein.

ROASTED TOMATOES & FETA

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pints cherry tomatoes
- 1 shallot, quartered
- 4 garlic cubes, defrosted
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Kosher salt, red pepper flakes
- 1 block (8 oz) light feta
- Olive oil cooking spray

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven 400°F. Toss first 6 ingredients in an ovenproof dish. Place feta in the center, spray with cooking spray. Bake uncovered ~40 minutes until feta is golden.

Makes 4 servings — count each as a protein, vegetable, and fat.

CHEESE BALLS

INGREDIENTS

- 1½ cups farmer's cheese
- ½ cup 5% soft white cheese or low-fat ricotta (drained)
- 1 cup low-fat grated yellow cheese (muenster, cheddar)
- ¼ cup minced scallions
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- Garnishes: paprika, dill, parsley, roasted nuts, sesame seeds

INSTRUCTIONS

Mix all ingredients and refrigerate 30 minutes. Form into small balls and roll in any or all garnishes. Refrigerate airtight up to 2 days. Sweet variation: omit scallions, add ½ tsp vanilla and roll in cinnamon. Chinese variation: swap soy sauce for Worcestershire, roll in minced ginger.

Makes 17 servings. Count 2 balls as a protein plus a fat.

GRILLED TUNA WITH OLIVE RELISH

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- ■ cup chopped pitted Kalamata olives
- ¼ cup finely chopped celery
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ■ tsp salt, pepper
- 1¾ lbs tuna steak, cut into 6 portions
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine relish ingredients in a bowl. Preheat grill to medium-high. Rub tuna with oil, season with salt and pepper. Grill ~4 minutes per side until seared and just cooked through. Serve with relish and lemon wedges.

Makes 6 servings — count each as a complete protein, no added fat.

EMPOWER.

STAY THE SAME. ENJOY YOM TOV. HAPPY SHAVUOS.